



U.S. Agency for
International
Development

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Global Health

SUCCESS STORIES

HIV/AIDS

Home Care Program Brings Care to AIDS Patients

IN CAMBODIA, THE KHMER HIV/AIDS NGO Alliance (KHANA)—with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development through the International HIV/AIDS Alliance—is bringing much-needed health care to HIV/AIDS patients through home visitation. KHANA's 11 Home Care Teams, which consist of two government nurses and three nongovernmental organization staff, visit patients at least three times per month across the project's 35 sites located in the 16 provinces hardest hit by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Home care is particularly important in Cambodia where there is a severe shortage of hospital beds, inability to afford prophylactic drug therapies, and poor nutrition. Allowing AIDS patients to remain in the community also fosters better understanding of HIV/AIDS within families and community and permits questions and misunderstandings about prevention and care to be addressed as they arise.

The Home Care Teams provide palliative care, counseling, education, and welfare support to the patient and family members. They foster contacts within the community, pagodas, hospitals, and other institutions to help support their activities, thus creating a Home Care Network of partnerships. Strong partnerships at many levels have enabled scarce resources to be shared and ensured the effective utilization of each player's comparative advantage. In addition, the careful selection of the right mix of skills and experience among Home Care Team members has contributed to successful teamwork and the provision of comprehensive services to patients and their families.

People receiving home care visits report that they feel better able to look after themselves. By focusing on better nutrition and early treatment of infections, they say they enjoy both better health and more positive outlooks. Family members have a better understanding of HIV/AIDS and greater confidence in caring for a patient. They report the program has provided both financial and time-saving benefits. Community leaders report reduced discrimination, fear, and anger and an increased knowledge and support for people living with AIDS.

The KHANA initiative grew out of a one-year, home-based care pilot project initiated by the Cambodian Ministry of Health in 1998. KHANA, World Vision, and Maryknoll then expanded the program to Phnom Penh and Battambang Province, building on partnerships formed under the pilot phase. A June 2000 evaluation of KHANA's home care program, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and conducted by the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, found the community response to the program to be overwhelmingly positive at all levels. USAID has since increased its support of the home care initiative in Cambodia for which complementary funding is being provided by the World Bank and the Japan Social Development Fund.

"The Home Care Team help me continue with my business of selling food; before [they started visiting], I couldn't even get out of bed. Without them my children would have to leave school to look after me."

— Tonle Bassac, a 30-year-old widow living with AIDS

1300 Pennsylvania
Avenue NW
Washington, DC
20523-3600

www.usaid.gov

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